

I am grateful for the continuing support of the Congress for U.S. efforts, including the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces to Macedonia, towards peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia. I remain committed to consulting closely with the Congress on our foreign policy, and I look forward to continued cooperation as we move forward toward attainment of our goals in the region.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Robert C. Byrd, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 10.

Remarks to the North Atlantic Council in Brussels

January 10, 1994

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary General, and distinguished leaders. I am deeply honored to represent my Nation at the North Atlantic Council this morning, as eight previous Presidents have done before me. Each of us came here for the same compelling reason: The security of the North Atlantic region is vital to the security of the United States. The founders of this alliance created the greatest military alliance in history. It was a bold undertaking. I think all of us know that we have come together this week because history calls upon us to be equally bold once again in the aftermath of the cold war. Now we no longer fear attack from a common enemy. But if our common adversary has vanished, we know our common dangers have not.

With the cold war over, we must confront the destabilizing consequences of the unfreezing of history which the end of the cold war has wrought. The threat to us now is not of advancing armies so much as of creeping instability. The best strategy against this threat is to integrate the former Communist states into our fabric of liberal democracy, economic prosperity, and military cooperation. For our security in this generation will be shaped by whether reforms in these nations succeed in the face of their own very

significant economic frustration, ethnic tensions, and intolerant nationalism.

The size of the reactionary vote in Russia's recent election reminds us again of the strength of democracy's opponents. The ongoing slaughter in Bosnia tallies the price when those opponents prevail. If we don't meet our new challenge, then most assuredly, we will once again, someday down the road, face our old challenges again. If democracy in the East fails, then violence and disruption from the East will once again harm us and other democracies.

I believe our generation's stewardship of this grand alliance, therefore, will most critically be judged by whether we succeed in integrating the nations to our east within the compass of Western security and Western values. For we've been granted an opportunity without precedent: We really have the chance to recast European security on historic new principles: the pursuit of economic and political freedom. And I would argue to you that we must work hard to succeed now, for this opportunity may not come to us again.

In effect, the world wonders now whether we have the foresight and the courage our predecessors had to act on our long-term interests. I'm confident that the steel in this alliance has not rusted. Our nations have proved that by joining together in the common effort in the Gulf war. We proved it anew this past year by working together, after 7 long years of effort, in a spirit of compromise and harmony to reach a new GATT agreement. And now we must do it once again.

To seize the great opportunity before us I have proposed that we forge what we have all decided to call the Partnership For Peace, opened to all the former Communist states of the Warsaw Pact, along with other non-NATO states. The membership of the Partnership will plan and train and exercise together and work together on missions of common concern. They should be invited to work directly with NATO both here and in the coordination cell in Mons.

The Partnership will prepare the NATO alliance to undertake new tasks that the times impose upon us. The Combined Joint Task Force Headquarters we are creating will let

us act both effectively and with dispatch in helping to make and keep the peace and in helping to head off some of the terrible problems we are now trying to solve today. We must also ready this alliance to meet new threats, notably from weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them.

Building on NATO's creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council 2 years ago, the Partnership For Peace sets in motion a process that leads to the enlargement of NATO. We began this alliance with 12 members. Today there are 16, and each one has strengthened the alliance. Indeed, our treaty always looked to the addition of new members who shared the alliance's purposes and who could enlarge its orbit of democratic security. Thus, in leading us toward the addition of these Eastern states, the Partnership For Peace does not change NATO's original vision, it realizes that vision.

So let us say here to the people in Europe's east, we share with you a common destiny, and we are committed to your success. The democratic community has grown, and now it is time to begin welcoming these newcomers to our neighborhood.

As President Mitterrand said so eloquently, some of the newcomers want to be members of NATO right away, and some have expressed reservations about this concept of the Partnership For Peace. Some have asked me in my own country, "Well, is this just the best you can do? Is this sort of splitting the difference between doing nothing and full membership at least for the Visegrad states?" And to that, let me answer at least for my part an emphatic no, for many of the same reasons President Mitterrand has already outlined.

Why should we now draw a new line through Europe just a little further east? Why should we now do something which could foreclose the best possible future for Europe? The best possible future would be a democratic Russia committed to the security of all of its European neighbors. The best possible future would be a democratic Ukraine, a democratic government in every one of the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, all committed to market cooperation, to common security, and to

democratic ideals. We should not foreclose that possibility.

The Partnership For Peace, I would argue, gives us the best of both worlds. It enables us to prepare and to work toward the enlargement of NATO when other countries are capable of fulfilling their NATO responsibilities. It enables us to do it in a way that gives us the time to reach out to Russia and to these other nations of the former Soviet Union, which have been almost ignored through this entire debate by people around the world, in a way that leaves open the possibility of a future for Europe that totally breaks from the destructive past we have known.

So I say to you, I do not view this as some sort of half-hearted compromise. In substance, this is a good idea. It is the right thing to do at this moment in history. It leaves open the best possible future for Europe, and leaves us the means to settle for a future that is not the best but is much better than the past. And I would argue that is the course that we all ought to pursue.

I think we have to be clear, in doing it, about certain assumptions and consequences. First, if we move forward in this manner, we must reaffirm the bonds of our own alliance. America pledges its efforts in that common purpose. I pledge to maintain roughly 100,000 troops in Europe, consistent with the expressed wishes of our allies. The people of Europe can count on America to maintain this commitment.

Second, we have to recognize that this new security challenge requires a range of responses different from the ones of the past. That is why our administration has broken with previous American administrations in going beyond what others have done to support European efforts to advance their own security and interests. All of you have received our support in moving in ways beyond NATO. We supported the Maastricht Treaty. We support the commitment of the European Union to a common foreign and security policy. We support your efforts to refurbish the Western European Union so that it will assume a more vigorous role in keeping Europe secure. Consistent with that goal, we have proposed making NATO assets available to WEU operations in which NATO itself is

not involved. While NATO must remain the linchpin of our security, all these efforts will show our people and our legislatures a renewed purpose in European institutions and a better balance of responsibilities within the transatlantic community.

Finally, in developing the Partnership For Peace, each of us must willingly assume the burdens to make that succeed. This must not be a gesture. It is a forum. It is not just a forum. This Partnership For Peace is also a military and security initiative, consistent with what NATO was established to achieve. There must be a somber appreciation that expanding our membership will mean extending commitments that must be supported by military strategies and postures. Adding new members entails not only hard decisions but hard resources. Today those resources are not great, but nonetheless, as the Secretary General told me in the meeting this morning, they must be forthcoming in order for this to be taken seriously by our allies and our friends who will immediately subscribe to the Partnership.

Let me also—in response to something that President Mitterrand said and that is on all of our minds, the problem in Bosnia—say that when we talk about making hard decisions, we must be prepared to make them. And tonight I have been asked to talk a little bit about the work I have been doing with Russia and what I believe we all should be doing to support democracy and economic reform there. But I'd like to make two points about Bosnia.

First, I want to reaffirm that the United States remains ready to help NATO implement a viable settlement in Bosnia voluntarily reached by the parties. We would, of course, have to seek the support of our Congress in this, but let me say I think we can get it if such an operation would clearly be under NATO command, that the means of carrying out the mission be equivalent to its purposes, and that these purposes be clear in scope and in time.

Second, I welcome the reassertion by the alliance in this declaration of our warning against the strangulation of Sarajevo and the safe areas. But if we are going to reassert this warning it cannot be seen as mere rhetoric. Those who attack Sarajevo must under-

stand that we are serious. If we leave the sentence in the declaration we have to mean it.

Those of us gathered here must understand that, therefore, if the situation does not improve, the alliance must be prepared to act. What is at stake is not just the safety of the people in Sarajevo and any possibility of bringing this terrible conflict to an end but the credibility of the alliance itself. And that, make no mistake about it, will have great ramifications in the future in other contexts.

Therefore, in voting for this language, I expect the North Atlantic Council to take action when necessary. And I think if anyone here does not agree with that, you shouldn't vote for language. I think it is the appropriate language, but we have to be clear when we put something like this in the declaration.

Let me say finally that I ran across the following quotation by a distinguished and now deceased American political writer, Walter Lippmann. Three days after the North Atlantic Treaty was signed Lippmann wrote this, prophetically, "The pact will be remembered long after the conditions that have provoked it are no longer the main business of mankind. For the treaty recognizes and proclaims a community of interest which is much older than the conflict with the Soviet Union and, come what may, will survive it."

Well, this meeting will prove him right. The Soviet Union is gone, but our community of interest endures. And now it is up to us to build a new security for a new future for the Atlantic people in the 21st century.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:15 a.m. at NATO Headquarters. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference in Brussels

January 10, 1994

Initiatives in Europe

The President. Good evening. Ladies and gentlemen, I came to Europe to help strengthen European integration, to create a new security for the United States and its